



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS
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FOUNDER
Mrs. Sybil Brand

CHAIRPERSON
Mrs. Eleanor R. Montañó

VICE CHAIRPERSON
Mr. Frank S. Bacio

Ms. Barbara Bigby
Mr. Vito Cannella
Ms. Rita Hall
Mr. John A. Hammargren
Mr. Carl E. Moore

MINUTES OF THE **SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS** **MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING** **NOVEMBER 19, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Montañó called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chair Montañó led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Chair Eleanor R. Montañó
Frank Bacio
Barbara Bigby
Rita Hall
Carl E. Moore

Excused Absence

Vito Cannella
John A. Hammargren

Others Present

Captain Warren Asmus, Sheriff's Department
Commander Margaret Ruiz-Wagner, Sheriff's Department
Michael Varela, Probation Department
Barbara Butler, Department of Children and Family Services
Dorothy Channel, Department of Children and Family Services
Carla Carr, Department of Auditor-Controller
Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Department of Mental Health
Michael Henderson, Internal Services Department
Peter Zertuche, Community Care Licensing

Staff

Janice Davis, Commission Services Staff
Garen Khachian, Commission Services Staff

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Chair Montañó welcomed everyone in attendance and requested that Department Representatives introduce themselves.

Sheriff's Department:

Commander Margaret Ruiz-Wagner reported the following and distributed handouts:

- The grand total of inmate assaults on staff was 47.
- The total number of staff personnel injured was 42.
- The total number of inmates injured was 37.
- There was a total of one (1) complaint by an inmate between the dates of 9/1/08 and 11/14/08. The incident, which occurred on 9/17/08, involved the use of force by deputy personnel, and was determined to be unfounded.
- Electronic Immobilization Devices (Tasers) shall only be issued to and used by personnel who have completed the Department's Taser Program.
- Members authorized to carry Tasers on duty may purchase Departmentally approved Tasers for on and off duty use.

Commissioners Bigby joined the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Captain Asmus reported the following:

- The Courts are dealing with budget constraints.
- The "Video Arraignment System" has eliminated the overtime required for transportation of inmates.
- Transportation over time has been reduced with the implementation of "Video Arraignment" in the Glendale Court; 20-25 video arraignments take place weekly.
- Temporary holding cells are being used in the Pasadena Court, and "Video Arraignment" will be implemented next.

Probation Department:

Mr. Michael Varela reported the following:

- The water quality issue at Camp Gonzalez has been resolved.
- A new computer system program allowing information to be shared by all Probation Camps is being implemented.
- In response to the article in the Los Angeles Times, November 19, 2008, entitled "L.A. County Acts On Youth Camp Safety", the Department has hired a consultant to train all Departmental staff in "Safe Crisis Management" focusing on restraint training. A standard documentation system is to be employed for grievances filed in all Probation Camps.

Department of Children and Family Services:

Ms. Dorothy Channel gave the following report and then reported on four articles:

- The reported number of physical abuse allegations was 7.
- The reported number of sexual abuse allegations was 8.
- The reported number of general neglect allegations was 8.
- The reported number of runaways from group homes was 132.
- There have been no group home closures since the October 15, 2008, Sybil Brand Commission meeting.
- "AAHC Presents \$500 Scholarships To Foster Youth", regarding members of the County's African American Heritage Committee who will present two (2) \$500 scholarships to youths who will emancipate from the County's foster care this year .
- "United Friends Of The Children – College Sponsorship Program", regarding foster youth having access to a high quality education and the opportunity to pursue their goal. The College Sponsorship Program offers students \$3,000 a year for up to five years for college-related expenses.
- "Los Angeles Beat The Odds Scholarship Program", regarding "The Children's Defense Fund" a non-profit child advocacy organization championing policies and programs that lift children out of poverty; protect them from abuse and neglect; and ensure their access to health care, quality education, and a moral and spiritual foundation.
- "Get Into Music", regarding the School of Music Production and Technology providing a platform for young people where musical creativity is nurtured and enhanced; this unique and exciting program is for 13 to 21 years olds who are in the Foster Care System.
- "Bourne Inc Group Home" was monitored by Community Care Licensing, DCFS and Auditor-Controller and placed on a 30 day Corrective Action Plan.

Department of Auditor-Controller:

Ms. Carla Carr reported on Audits of the Human Services Network Group Home in Parthenia, Granada Hills, and Shadow Hills, which revealed the following significant problems:

- The Human Services Network Group Home Audit in Pathenia revealed facility deficiencies; children are not being taught life skills and do not have life books.
- The Human Services Network Group Home Audit in Granada Hills revealed insufficient outings/activities, and insufficient quantities of food during meals.

- The Human Services Network Group Home Audit in Shadow Hills revealed insufficient outings/activities, and children do not have life books.

Additionally she reported the following “Group Home Follow-up Audits” have been completed:

- Alannah Home- Rainbow Ridge Group Home in Pomona
- Washington Hancock Group Home in Los Angeles

Department of Mental Health:

Ms. Elizabeth Fitzgerald introduced herself and informed the Commission that she is representing Mr. Paul McIver and reported the following:

- Therapeutic Behavioral Service (TBS) is a one on one service for children who are in mental health treatment, and are at risk of going into a RCL level 12 or stepping down to level 14. The service helps the children identify triggers of acting out behavior and gives them some replacement behavior. The TBS worker is supervised by a Mental Health practitioner. The goal of the project is to provide services to all TBS children adjudicated and placed in Mental Juvenile Hall facilities in the “Care” unit (suicidal children) and the “ESU” unit (violent children) due to their severe mental condition. These children can not be transitioned to a RCL level 12 or 14, but being under the care of the TBS worker would assist these children with their transition into society.
- The State Department of Mental Health has mandated the County Department of Mental Health to develop a “Performance Improvement Project” which deals with the highest users of Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT). The Department is developing the questions for the project. The duration of the project is two (2) years.

Internal Services Department:

Mr. Michael Henderson reported the following:

- ISD received 5,162 service calls, and 4,944 of the calls were resolved.
- ISD instituted a testing procedure for water in all Probation camps. The water is tested for bacteria monthly and chlorine residual weekly.

Community Care Licensing Division:

Mr. Peter Zertuche introduced himself and informed the Commission he is representing Mr. Alan P. Henry and reported the following:

- Bourne Inc. Group Home assessment has not been completed, but complaints have been substantiated; Needs and Service Plans were incomplete; and the Group Home will have 30 days to implement the Corrective action Plan. Allowance issue is still pending.

- Greene Home For Boys Group Home has officially closed as of 10/16/08.
- T & T Home For Boys Group Home was put on a compliance plan for the next 12 months due to numerous deficiencies. The Department will monitor the licensee's compliance plan over the next 12 months to determine whether the licensee is operating the facility in a manner consistent with the law and the compliance plan.

Chair Montañó and the Commissioners thanked the various Department Representatives for their participation and reports.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 12, 2008, MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Bigby, seconded by Vice Chair Bacio, and unanimously carried, the minutes of November 12, 2008, were approved with no changes.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Montañó reported on one (1) news articles:

- "LA. County Acts On Youth Camp Safety", Los Angeles Times, November 19, 2008, regarding criticism of the county's probation camps based on inspections, records and interviews with juvenile offenders. It was found that probation officers roughed up minors under their supervision, instigated or allowed fights, denied medical treatment and drank alcohol in staff quarters.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Commissioner Bacio reported that the current balance of the Commission's Charitable Fund is \$1,079.83.

CORRESPONDENCE/AUDIT REPORT

There was none.

FACILITY/GROUP HOME INSPECTION REPORTS FROM NOVEMBER 12, 2008, TO NOVEMBER 18, 2008

B & I Group Home #2 – 4, #2 – Commissioners Montañó and Hammargren

The facility was visited on November 13, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concerns: Several children need library cards; car kit needs to be restocked.

Community Youth Sports and Arts Foundation – 11, #2 – Commissioners Hall and Moore

The facility was visited on November 13, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concerns: Furniture needs to be replaced; beds and dressers are worn out; one lavatory needs to be fixed; vehicle is needed for transportation of minors; easy access to school transcripts is needed; stove needs cleaning.

San Gabriel Children's Center (Nearfield) – 53, #1 – Commissioner Bigby

The facility was visited on November 17, 2008, and the home is closed.

St. Paul Group Home #1 – 55, #5– Commissioner Montaña

The facility was visited on November 17, 2008, and the home is closed.

Fleming & Barne Dimondale Adolescent #3 – 21, #5 – Commissioner Montaña

The facility was visited on November 18, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concern: Fire extinguishers need to be recharged.

Pasadena City Courthouse – Commissioners Bacio and Bigby

The facility was visited on November 18, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concerns: Needs security cameras in the main lobby and from the tunnel to the courthouse; need to repaint the main and the fifth floor lockup.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was none.

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (To be presented and placed on a future agenda)

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Montaña adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m. in memory of Grace Bradbury, LAPD volunteer.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Davis
Commission Services Division